Agreement between India and Mauritius for Surveillance of EEZ of Mauritius

2397. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formalised an agreement with Mauritian for the surveillance of exclusive economic zone of Mauritius in Indian ocean by the Indian Navy;

(b) whether this calls for continued regular deployment of Indian Naval vessels and personnel in the Mauritian waters;

(c) whether our navy is fully stretched in keeping under vigil, its own long coastline; and

(d) whether the Ministry of Defence was consulted before this agreement was formalised?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir. India has not signed any formal agreement with Mauritius for surveillance of their exclusive economic zone. However, in January, 2003, on a request from Mauritius, India had agreed to assist Mauritius in the surveillance of its exclusive economic zone.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) In the context of (a) above, Ministry of Defence was consulted.

Recruitment of scouts to plug infiltration

2398. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry has a proposal to recruit scouts from villages to plug infiltration across the Line of Control;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government had recruited scouts from villages earlier; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and whether such recruitment helped